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April 16, 1997 LB 49, 591

SPEAKER WITHEM: Madam President, members of the body. What my amendment is the...includes the contents of LB 591, which is a bill that was introduced to the Government Committee. It came from the committee with an eight-nothing vote. There were three proponents at the hearing. There were no opponents. It is...further, it is a measure...as I believe, Senator Robinson, this is one of the measures that came out of the Petition Review Committee over the summer. What it does, it deals with the accountability aspect of the initiative and petition process or some of the issues that came out of that whole set of issues. First of all, it revises the legislative intent to emphasize that the state does have an interest in ensuring that state and local elections are free of corruption and appearances of corruption. There was a question about what constitutes a ballot question and what does not. This would basically eliminate the laundry list just indicating that any measure that is on the ballot is, in fact, a ballot question. Major out of state contributors who currently do not file reports into Nebraska would have to if they contributed expenditures...made contributions or expenditures in excess of \$10,000. And basically, that is what the amendment would do. Again, I believe I visited with Senator Schimek about this. She has a...she has no concerns, as I understand it. Further, Senator Maurstad had asked me a question earlier today about whether this would place any additional reporting requirements to political parties. Republic Senatorial Campaign Committee, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. We have checked with Mr. Daley in Accountability and there appears to be no additional requirements for those sorts of people. With that, I would urge the adoption of the amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Robinson.

SENATOR ROBINSON: Madam President, members of the body. I just stand to encourage all of you to support this amendment. I think it's very vital as far as tightening our petition laws. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator. Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Madam President and members of the body. I...this came a little bit too quickly for me. I'm sorry